AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
EDITORIAL STYLE
A-Z

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

When we write about American University, we want to present a clear and consistent voice, both online and in print. Using a style guide ensures that we achieve the clarity and consistency that strengthen our brand, project a professional image, and reflect our academic excellence.

AU Editorial Style: A–Z is a quick reference guide. Organized alphabetically, the guide features *see* and *see also* references to direct users to the terms they seek. Illustrative examples are specific to AU wherever possible and demonstrate American University's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism.

Because a quick reference guide, by definition, does not cover all aspects of editorial style in exhaustive detail, we invite you to consult the 17th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, parent style guide to *AU Editorial Style: A–Z*. Any notes that mention *The Chicago Manual of Style* refer to **the online version** of the 17th edition, available through American University Library by entering your AU email address and password.

For spelling support, we turn to *The Chicago Manual of Style*'s recommended dictionaries:

- *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*
- the most recent edition of its chief abridgment, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*
- the continually updated **merriam-webster.com**

We welcome your feedback on *AU Editorial Style: A–Z*. Please contact UCM's editorial staff at **austyle@american.edu** with suggestions for updating future editions, questions about editorial style, or assistance in navigating the parent style guide and dictionaries.

A

abbreviations

Spell out unfamiliar abbreviations, including acronyms, on first reference.
Enclose the abbreviation in parentheses after the spelled-out version.
Use the abbreviation alone on subsequent references.
Do not use periods in abbreviations containing only capital letters.
see also **a.m., ampersands, DC, degrees, e.g., i.e., p.m., states, tests and exams, US**

academic years

Run from beginning of fall semester to end of the following calendar year's
summer sessions.
Use both years.
Lowercase in running text.
Omit periods in abbreviated form (AY).
Separate years with an en dash.

> in academic year 2021–22, the '21–'22 academic year, AY21–22

see also **en dashes**

acknowledgment

Preferred spelling.
Use instead of *acknowledgement*.

acting

Lowercase in running text when it modifies a professional title.

> Peter Starr assumed the role of acting provost in July 2020.

> Todd Park, the spring 2021 commencement speaker, received an honorary doctor
> of public service degree from acting provost Peter Starr.

Capitalize only in marketing collateral and advertisements, where names
and professional titles act much as headlines.

> Acting Provost Peter Starr

see also **former, interim, professional titles and positions**

addresses

see **email addresses, postal addresses, web addresses**

administration

Lowercase in running text when referring to a government official's
period of service.

> the Biden administration, Bowser administration officials

Capitalize when referring to a specific office or department.

> the Department of Public Administration and Policy

advisor
Preferred spelling.
Use instead of adviser.

African American
Two words. No hyphen.
see sections 8.38–39 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*
see also **Black, ethnicities**

alum(s)
Use when referring to nonbinary graduate(s).

alumna(e)
Use when referring to female graduate(s).

alumni
Use when referring to multiple (two or more) male graduates.
Can also refer to multiple graduates of mixed genders.

alumnus
Use when referring to one male graduate.

a.m.
Lowercase. Use periods.
No space between *a*. and *m*.
see also **midnight, noon, time**

ambassador
see **professional titles and positions**

American University
Never preceded by *the*.
see also **AU**

among
Represents a relationship involving more than two parties or entities.

> Discussions among faculty, staff, and alumni were fruitful
> and productive.

see also **between**

ampersands

Use in graphic elements, charts, headlines, and social media.
Use with recognized companies, products, and schools in running text.
No spaces on either side when used with initials.

A&E, Florida A&M University, M&M's

Omit comma before ampersand when it replaces *and*.

Adduci, Mastriani & Schaumberg
not Adduci, Mastriani, & Schaumberg

Avoid using in fact sheets, brochures, marketing collateral, and news stories.
Always use *and* with centers, departments, institutes, and centers.

Center for Media and Social Impact
Department of Public Administration and Policy
Women and Politics Institute
People of Color Faculty and Staff Affinity Group

see also **centers, departments, headlines, institutes**

annual

Use with events held for two or more successive years.

the 24th annual McDowell Conference on philosophy and social policy

see also **inaugural**

antiracism/antiracist

One word. No hyphen.

the Antiracist Praxis subject guide
the Antiracist Research and Policy Center

Some organizations and programs may still use a hyphen. They are
exceptions to the rule above.

the Anti-Racism Education Collective

apostrophes

Use to replace the first two digits of graduation years.

SPA/BA '21
Class of '21

Do not use to form plurals, except with lowercase letters.

x's and *y*'s
*not x*s and *y*s
the 1990s
not the 1990's

PCs
not PC's

Rewrite if confusion might result from not using an apostrophe.

She was a straight-A student in high school.
not She got straight As in high school.

Use your keyboard to form an apostrophe:

PC
Make sure the **NUM LOCK** key is turned on.
Hold down **ALT**.
Type **0146** on the number pad.

Mac
Press **OPTION**, **SHIFT**, **RIGHT BRACKET**.

see also **Class of 'XX, grad info**

appendixes
Preferred plural.
Use instead of *appendices*.

articles (a, an, the)
Use *an* before words that begin with vowel sounds.

an MBA
not a MBA

an hour
not a hour

If an article applies to all items in a list, it may be used either before the first item only or before each item in the list.

US intelligence agencies include the CIA, the FBI, and the NSA.
or US intelligence agencies include the CIA, FBI, and NSA.

If articles apply to some items in a list and not to others—or if some items require different articles than others—use the appropriate article before each.

He holds a BA, an MFA, and a PhD.

She has interned at the National Science Foundation, USAID, and a small nonprofit.

articles (published)

Use roman type. No italics.
Enclose in quotation marks.

> In the July 2020 issue of *American* magazine, Adrienne Frank profiled AU alumna and art broker Lori Weisbart Polson, SOC/BA '87, in "The Art of Lockdown."

artworks

Use italics for titles of drawings, paintings, photographs, etc.
Capitalize headline-style.

> *Orange Desert* and *Bessie Shoemaker's Pigs* were among the paintings in the *Robert Franklin Gates: Paint What You See* exhibition at the AU Museum.

Use roman type for works of antiquity and enormous sculptures.

> the Venus of Willendorf, the Statue of Liberty

see also **exhibitions, headlines**

Asian American

Two words. No hyphen.
see sections 8.38–39 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*
see also **ethnicities**

AU

No periods.
May be used on first reference in advertisements when space is limited.
University logo must be included in such advertisements.

AUx/AUx1/AUx2

Abbreviations for the **American University Experience** courses.

awards

Capitalize official names of awards.

> the Maria Bueno Lifetime Achievement Award
> the President's Award
> Scholar-Teacher of the Year

see also **fellows, fellowships, scholars, scholarships**

B

between

Represents a relationship involving two parties or entities.

Collaborations between students and faculty are encouraged.

see also **among**

biannual(ly)

Means twice a year.

biennial(ly)

Means every two years.

bimonthly

Means every two months.
see also **semimonthly**

biweekly

Means every two weeks.
see also **semiweekly**

Black

Capitalize when referring to a person's racial and ethnic identity.
see section 8.38 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* and **"Black and White: A Matter of Capitalization"**
see also **African American, ethnicities**

Board of Trustees

Capitalize first and third words when referring to AU's governing body. Lowercase *board* when used alone.

Quarterly meetings of the Board of Trustees are held in September, November, February or March, and May. The September meeting serves as the board's annual retreat.

see also **trustees**

books

Use italics for titles.
Capitalize headline-style.

Kyle Dargan explores issues of racial justice in *Anagorisis: Poems*.

Patricia Park's *Re Jane* is a contemporary retelling of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

No Visible Bruises, by Rachel Louise Snyder, won the 2020 Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism.

see also **headlines**

buildings

Capitalize names of buildings.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.
Use full name on first reference.
Shorten or abbreviate on subsequent references.

the Hall of Science, Anderson and Centennial Halls
the McKinley Building, at McKinley, in the building
the Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen Arts Center, Katzen Arts Center, the Katzen
Kay Spiritual Life Center, the Kay communities

see also **campus locations, rooms**

bulleted lists

see **vertical lists**

C

cabinet

Capitalize when referring to the President's Cabinet.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

campus

Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.
see also **East Campus, main campus, Tenley Campus**

campus locations

Capitalize full and abbreviated names of campus locations.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

Eric A. Friedheim Quadrangle, Friedheim Quad, the quad

see also **buildings, rooms**

campus plan

Capitalize and use italics when referring to a specific year's publication.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

the *2021 Campus Plan*, the campus plan

cell phone

Two words.

centers

Capitalize full names of centers.
Lowercase on subsequent references or when used in a generic sense.

Center for Neuroscience and Behavior, the center

see **Centers** for a current list of centers at AU

centuries

Lowercase. Spell out.

the twenty-first century, nineteenth-century literature

certificates

May be capitalized in marketing materials.
Lowercase in running text.

a graduate certificate in arts management
undergraduate certificate programs

chair (noun or verb)

Preferred gender-neutral term.
Use instead of *chairman*, *chairperson*, or *chairwoman*.

> Marc Duber is chair of American University's Board of Trustees. (noun)
> Marc Duber chairs American University's Board of Trustees. (verb)

Challenge Accepted

Capitalize when referring to AU's brand campaign.
Use roman type.

Change Can't Wait

Capitalize when referring to AU's comprehensive fundraising campaign.
Use roman type.

changemaker(s)

One word. No hyphen.

Changemakers for a Changing World

Title of AU's strategic plan.
Capitalize headline-style. Use italics.

chosen names

Use a person's full chosen name (including surname) on first reference.
Nicknames may be placed in quotation marks after a first name.
Subsequent references should use surname only. Omit courtesy titles.

> Beginning with the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal and extending through last summer in Rio, George "Cookie" Reed-Dellinger, Kogod/BSBA '69, Kogod/MBA '71, has attended 14 Olympics. . . . Reed-Dellinger began playing soccer his sophomore year at AU.

Chosen names may include nicknames, anglicized names, initial(s), monyms, or names that affirm gender identity. Omit any references to names that a person no longer identifies with.
see also **courtesy titles, initials**

cisgender (adjective)

One word. No hyphen.
Describes people whose gender identity matches their assigned-at-birth sex.
Antonym to *transgender*.
see also **transgender**

cis man/cis men

Two words. No hyphen.
Abbreviated form of *cisgender man/cisgender men*.
see also **trans man/trans men**

cis woman/cis women

Two words. No hyphen.
Abbreviated form of *cisgender woman/cisgender women*.
see also **trans woman/trans women**

cities

Follow with a comma and the state, country, or territory in running text.
Well-known metropolitan areas may be considered exceptions to the rule above.

President Burwell was born in Hinton, West Virginia, a small town
of less than 3,000 people.

see also **countries, postal addresses, states**

Class of 'XX

Capitalize. Replace first two digits of year with an apostrophe, not a single
quotation mark.

Class of '21
not Class of '21

If you're using Microsoft Word:

Hold down the **CTRL** and **QUOTATION MARKS** keys
to make sure your apostrophe is facing the right way!

classes

see **courses**

Clawed Z. Eagle

Full name of AU's official mascot.
Usually goes by first name only.
see also **Eagles**

co (prefix)

No hyphen, unless confusion might result without one.

coauthor, cochair, coeducational, cofounder, cosponsored,
coworker, co-op

college(s)

see **school(s)**

commas

Use before *and* or *or* in a series of three or more.

Clawed wears a red, white, and blue uniform.

Use in four-digit numerals after the thousands place.
Benefactors Awards provide $1,500 stipends to students interested in careers in campaigning, lobbying, or advocacy.

see sections 6.16–55 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance

commencement
see **events**

compose

Parts compose a whole.

Senior university administrators compose the President's Cabinet.
The President's Cabinet is composed of senior university administrators.

comprise

The whole comprises its parts.

The President's Cabinet comprises senior university administrators who serve as the university's officers and report directly to the president.
not The President's Cabinet is comprised of senior university administrators who serve as the university's officers and report directly to the president.

concentration

Preferred term when referring to academics.
Use instead of *concentrate* or *concentrating*.

Students who choose a concentration in global governance . . .
not Students who concentrate in global governance . . .
not Students concentrating in global governance . . .

conferences
see **events**

Congress

Capitalize when referring to the legislative body.

the US Congress, the 117th Congress

congressional

Lowercase, unless part of a proper noun.

> congressional elections, Congressional Fitness Center,
> a congressional internship

coronavirus

One word. Lowercase.
Preceded by *the* in running text.
> Experts shared what they had learned from the coronavirus in *American* magazine.

see also **COVID-19**

countries

Capitalize. Use full names of countries on first reference in running text.
Familiar abbreviations (UAE, UK, USSR) may be used on subsequent references.
If preceded by a city, follow the name of the country with a comma
in running text.

> AU Brussels Center is the home base for all of AU's study abroad
> programs in Belgium.

> Alumni shared their experiences studying in Brussels, Belgium,
> at AU Brussels Center.

see sections 10.31–32 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*
see also **abbreviations, cities, US**

courses

Capitalize full names of courses headline-style. Use roman type.

> The Design of Play, Games and Rhetoric, Introduction to
> 3D Static Modeling

coursework

One word.

court cases

Capitalize headline-style. Use italics.

> Raskin had more than enough Supreme Court case law to pack between
> the covers, from *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School
> District*, which set the standard for First Amendment rights in public
> schools, to *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, which
> protects students from being forced to salute the American flag or recite
> the Pledge of Allegiance.

courtesy titles (Dr., Miss, Mr., Mrs., Ms., Mx.)

Do not use in university publications.
On first reference, use a person's chosen name.
Use surname only on subsequent references.
First names may be used when two or more people have the same surname.
see also **chosen names, Mx.**

COVID-19

Capitalize all letters. Use hyphen.
see also **coronavirus**

credentials, professional

Spell out on first reference. Abbreviate on subsequent references.
Capitalize. Omit periods from abbreviated forms.

certified public accountant, CPA
registered nurse, RN

credit hours

Use *credit hours* on first reference. Use *credits* on subsequent references.
Always use numerals instead of spelled-out numbers.

6 credit hours or 6 credits
not six credit hours

cross (prefix)

Use hyphen with the following words.

cross-cultural, cross-departmental, cross-disciplinary, cross-functional

Check **merriam-webster.com** for spellings of other words with this prefix.

cum laude

Means *with distinction*.
Lowercase. Use italics.
see also **magna cum laude, summa cum laude**

D

dashes
see **em dashes, en dashes**

data
Takes the singular form of a verb when used as a synonym for *information*.
Takes the plural form of a verb when used in formal writing or in a scientific sense.

> The data <u>shows</u> donors how their money is used. (singular)
> The data collected <u>were</u> inconclusive. (plural)

Use one form or the other consistently throughout a piece of writing.

dates
Use month-day-year sequence.
Spell out full name of months in running text.
Omit ordinal suffixes after numerals.
Set off year with commas in running text.
End with time, if one is included.

> Our next staff meeting will be held on April 5, 2021, at 1 p.m.
> *not* Our next staff meeting will be held on Apr. 5, 2021 at 1 p.m.
> *not* Our next staff meeting will be held on April 5th at 1 p.m.

Use an en dash—or *from* and *to*—between two days to indicate a range.

> Commencement weekend will take place May 7–9, 2021.

> The course American Dreams/American Lives runs from May 10 to June 26, 2021.

see also **en dashes, months, time, years**

days of the week
May be abbreviated in marketing materials where space is limited.
Do not abbreviate in running text.

DC
May be abbreviated, even on first reference.
No periods.
Follow with a comma in running text if preceded by *Washington*.

> Muriel Bowser, SPA/MPP '00, was elected mayor of Washington, DC, in November 2014.

see also **Washington, DC**

deans
see **professional titles and positions**

degrees

Lowercase in running text. Omit periods from abbreviated forms.

a bachelor's degree, bachelor's degrees, a bachelor of arts, a BA
a master's degree, master's degrees, a master of education, an MEd
a doctoral degree, a doctorate, doctorates, a PhD in political science

see **Program Finder** to search for AU's current academic offerings
see also **certificates, grad info, honorary degrees, majors, minors**

departments

Capitalize names of academic departments.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

Department of Literature, the department, the literature and history departments

District

Capitalize when referring to the District of Columbia and specific political divisions.
Lowercase when used in a generic sense.

AU's School of Education created the Teacher Pipeline Project to change educational outcomes in the District by training young citizens to become future educators.

Congressman Jamie Raskin represents Maryland's Eighth Congressional District in the US House of Representatives. The district covers portions of Montgomery, Carroll, and Frederick Counties.

doctoral (adjective)

Lowercase.

a doctoral degree in education and policy and leadership

see also **degrees**

doctorate (noun)

Lowercase.

a doctorate in international relations

see also **degrees**

dorm or dormitory

Not a preferred term.
Use *residence hall* instead.

double major

Two words. No hyphen.

Dr.

Omit before faculty members' names in running text.
Use full name and professional title on first reference.
For subsequent references, use surname only.

School of International Service professor Paul Wapner published
Is Wildness Over? in 2020. Toward the end of the book, Wapner poses
a question to readers: Are we, the privileged, willing to approach our
relationship with nature in a fundamentally different way?

see also **courtesy titles**

dual-degree program

Use hyphen.

E

EagleBucks
One word. Capitalize first and third syllables.

Eagles
Capitalize when referring to AU students, alumni, athletic teams, organizations, and programs.

eagle-secure
Lowercase. Use hyphen.

East Campus
Two words. Capitalize both.
see also **main campus, Tenley Campus**

e.g.
Means for *example*.
Set off with commas in running text.
Use roman type.

email
One word. No hyphen.

email addresses
Do not underline in print publications.

em dashes
Longer than a hyphen (-) or an en dash (–).
Omit spaces on either side in running text.

> Some people—especially those new to the workforce or who've switched careers—want and need to connect and engage in informal networking. But for now, many companies will ride out the pandemic remotely.

> Despite the time savings for remote workers, however, many struggle to establish boundaries and rituals—called micro-transitions—that delineate work and home.

see sections 6.85–92 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*

Use your keyboard to form an em dash:

PC
Make sure the **NUM LOCK** key is turned on.
Hold down **ALT**.
Type **0151** on the number pad.

Mac
Press **OPTION**, **SHIFT**, **HYPHEN**.

emerita(e)

Capitalize when used as a professional title directly in front of a name.
Lowercase when used in a generic sense or after a name.

> Professor Emerita Barbara Bird is affiliated with the Department of Management at the Kogod School of Business.

> Norma Broude and Mary Garrard are professors emeritae affiliated with the Department of Art at the College of Arts and Sciences.

see also **professional titles and positions**

emeritus/emeriti

Capitalize when used as a professional title directly in front of a name.
Lowercase when used in a generic sense or after a name.

> Professor Emeritus Roger Stone is the former director of the Center for Israel Studies.

> Herman Schwartz, Myra Sklarew, and Howard Wachtel are professors emeriti affiliated with the Center for Israel Studies.

see also **professional titles and positions**

en dashes

Longer than a hyphen (-) and shorter than an em dash (—).
Most often used to connect numbers.
Omit spaces on either side in running text.
Do not combine with *from*.

> May 7–9, academic year 2021–2022, the 1927–1955 yearbooks
> *not* from May 7–9

see sections 6.78–84 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*

Use your keyboard to form an en dash:

PC
Make sure the **NUM LOCK** key is turned on.
Hold down **ALT**.
Type **0150** on the number pad.

Mac
Press **OPTION**, **HYPHEN**.

see also **academic years, universities with branches, years**

endowed chairs and professorships

Capitalize. Use full names on first reference.

Elizabeth F. Thompson is the Mohamed Said Farsi Chair of Islamic Peace.

entitled

Not a preferred term.
Use *titled* when referring to titles of published or creative works.

ethnicities

Learn and use the terms preferred by the people you write about.
Specific nationalities (Filipino) may be preferable to broad categories (Asian).
Understand that preferred terms may vary and do change over time.
see sections 8.38–39 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*
see also **African American, Asian American, Black, Latinx, White**

events

Capitalize names of specific events.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

University Student Awards Reception, the reception
President's Circle Dinner, the dinner
Fall 2021 Commencement, the commencement celebration
Multicultural Alumni Reunion, the reunion

exams

see **tests and exams**

exclamation points

Use sparingly!

exhibit (verb)

Do not use as a noun.

exhibition (noun)

Use italics for names of museum exhibitions.
Capitalize headline-style.

Peace Corps at 60: Inside the Volunteer Experience

see also **headlines**

F

Faculty Senate

Capitalize both words when referring to AU's.
Lowercase *senate* when used alone in subsequent references.

At an April 2021 meeting, the Faculty Senate viewed a draft video for the university's new brand campaign, Challenge Accepted. Among other topics, the senate also discussed changes to the faculty manual and the latest enrollment numbers.

FAQ

Preferred term.
Use instead of *FAQs*.
Q stands for *Questions* and doesn't need to be followed by an *s*.
Takes the singular form of a verb.

fellows

Capitalize when used with named fellowships.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

Sine Fellow, a fellow, the fellows

see also **scholars**

fellowships

Capitalize when referring to named fellowships.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

a Boren Fellowship, the fellowship

see also **awards, scholarships**

fewer

Means *not as many*.
Use with countable nouns.

Fewer men than women graduate from college in six years.

see also **less**

field study

Two words.

fieldwork

One word.

films

Use italics for titles.
Capitalize headline-style.

> Pamela Nadell, who holds the Patrick Clendenen Chair in Women's and Gender History, served as a historical consultant on the films *And the Gates Opened: Women in the Rabbinate* and *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg.*

see also **headlines**

first annual

Not a preferred term.
Use *inaugural* when referring to events happening for the first time.

firsthand (adjective and adverb)

One word. No hyphen.

first-year student(s)

Preferred term.
Use instead of *freshman* or *freshmen*.
Lowercase.

fiscal years

Run from July 1 to June 30 at AU.
Use only the year associated with June 30.
Lowercase in running text.
Omit periods in abbreviated form (FY).
Separate years with an en dash.

> fiscal year 2021, fiscal year '21, FY21, fiscal years 2021 and 2022, FY21–22

floors

Capitalize in postal addresses when referring to a specific floor.

> 4401 Connecticut Avenue NW, 6th Floor

former

Lowercase in running text when it modifies a professional title.

> Kerwin Hall is named after Cornelius M. Kerwin, former president of American University.

Capitalize only in marketing collateral and advertisements, where names and professional titles act much as headlines.

> Former AU President Neil Kerwin

see also **acting, interim, professional titles and positions**

forms

Capitalize names of forms in running text.
Abbreviations and acronyms do not require periods.
Refer to the form itself for correct capitalization or abbreviation.
Lowercase *form* when used in a generic sense.

the Common App, the FAFSA, a Flex Work Arrangement request form

foreign student(s)

Not a preferred term.
Use *international student(s)* instead.

forums

Preferred plural.
Use instead of *fora*.

Founders Day

Celebrated in late February.
Honors AU's congressional charter in 1893.
No apostrophe.

fractions

Spell out in running text. Use hyphen.

one-half, two-thirds, three-quarters

freshman/freshmen

Not a preferred term.
Use *first-year student(s)* instead.

full-time (adjective)

Use hyphen when modifying a noun.

She is a full-time employee of American University.

full time (adverb)

Two words. No hyphen.

She works full time at American University.

fundraiser

One word. No hyphen.

fundraising (adjective or noun)

One word. No hyphen.

G

gender-neutral language

Avoid gendered terminology unless it is clearly relevant.

employees, personnel, workforce
not manpower

business owner, business executive
not businessman

the women's basketball team
the lacrosse team
not the women's lacrosse team

the men's basketball team
the wrestling team
not the men's wrestling team

representative, spokesperson
not spokesman, spokeswoman

see also **chair, Latinx, Mx., pronouns**

Global South

Preferred term.
Use instead of *third world*.

GPA

May be abbreviated even on first reference.
Use numerals to represent grade point averages.

With a combined GPA of 3.70 in spring 2020, AU student-athletes
set a new record.

see also **grades**

grad info

Use after names of AU alumni, current students, and honorary degree recipients.
Abbreviate school.
Follow school by a forward slash.
Abbreviate degree.
Replace first two digits of year with an apostrophe—*not* a single quotation mark.

SOC/BA '21
not SOC/BA '21

Surround with commas in running text.

> Sarah McBride, SPA/BA '13, is the first openly transgender state senator in the US.

List multiple degrees from the same school in the order they were earned.
It is not necessary to repeat the school multiple times.

> A pioneering scholar, Abdul-Aziz Said, SIS/BA '54, MA '55, PhD '57, founded
> the international peace and conflict resolution program in 1995.

List multiple degrees from different schools in the order they were earned.

> Fanta Aw, Kogod/BSBA '90, SPA/MPA '94, CAS/PhD '11, serves as vice president
> of undergraduate enrollment, campus life, and inclusive excellence.

see also **degrees, honorary degrees, schools**

grades

Roman type. No quotation marks.
No apostrophes with plurals, unless confusion would result.

> She received an A+ on the midterm exam.
> Her grades included two Cs and three Bs.

grassroots (adjective)

One word.

> a grassroots campaign, a grassroots movement

groundwork

One word.

H

handwashing
One word. No hyphen.

headlines
Capitalize first and last words.
Lowercase *a, an,* and *the* (if they are not the first word in a headline).
Capitalize both parts of hyphenated words.
Lowercase *and, but, or,* and other coordinating conjunctions.
Capitalize all other principal words.
see sections 8.159–161 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance

health care (adjective or noun)
Two words. No hyphen.
Organizations and programs that use one word are exceptions to the rule above.

an online master of science in healthcare management

he/him/his
see **pronouns**

home page
Two words.

honorary degrees
Lowercase in running text.
Always include *honorary* before such degrees.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree at the College of Arts and Sciences commencement on May 11, 2019.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, CAS/Hon. DHL '19

see also **grad info**

hyphens
Shorter than an en dash (–) or an em dash (—).
Use to connect words representing two different but equal functions.

pass-fail, scholar-practitioner, student-athlete, work-study

Check **merriam-webster.com** to verify hyphenation.

see section 7.89 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance
see also **em dashes, en dashes**

i.e.
Means *that is* or *namely*.
Set off with commas in running text.
Use roman type.

impact (noun)
Preferred term.

impact (verb)
Not a preferred term.
Use *affect* (verb) or *influence* (verb) instead.

impactful
Not a preferred term.
Use *influential* or *powerful* instead.

inaugural
Preferred term when referring to events happening for the first time.
Use instead of *first annual*.

indexes
Preferred plural.
Use instead of *indices*.

Indigenous
May be capitalized when referring to a person's ethnicity.
see sections 8.38–39 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance
see also **ethnicities, Native**

information technology
Spell out on first reference. Abbreviate on subsequent references.
Lowercase, unless part of a proper noun.

> information technology courses, IT consulting
> Department of Information Technology and Analytics
> Office of Information Technology

initials
Capitalize. Follow with periods in names, unless used alone.
Spaces should follow periods when used.

> C. J. Cregg, Clawed Z. Eagle, W. E. B. DuBois, MLK, Malcolm X

see also **chosen names**

in residence

No hyphens when used with professional titles.

> artist in residence, executive in residence, scholar in residence

see also **professional titles and positions**

institutes

Capitalize full names of institutes.
Lowercase on subsequent references or when used in a generic sense.
Use *and* instead of ampersand.

> Founded in 2000, the Women and Politics Institute is a leading center for women's political leadership training and scholarly research. In addition to offering graduate and undergraduate certificates, the institute provides a training program for young women seeking to become involved in the political arena.

see **Centers** for a current list of institutes at AU

interim

Lowercase in running text when it modifies a professional title.

> Laura DeNardis served as interim dean of the School of Communication from 2019 to 2021.

> In a spring 2021 commencement video, SOC's interim dean Laura DeNardis shared some words of wisdom about using Zoom: "When a filter turns you into a talking cat, be able to laugh at yourself."

Capitalize only in marketing collateral and advertisements, where names and professional titles act much as headlines.

> Interim Dean Laura DeNardis

see also **acting, former, professional titles and positions**

international student(s)

Preferred term.
Use instead of *foreign student(*s).

internet

Lowercase.

Islamic (adjective)

Capitalize.

> Islamic intellectual history, a graduate certificate in Islamic finance

see also **Muslim**

J

journals
see **periodicals**

Jr. (Junior)
see **name suffixes**

junior(s)
Use for undergraduate students in their third year.

L

Latinx
May be used as a gender-neutral alternative to *Latina* or *Latino*.
see also **ethnicities**

lawmaker
One word. No hyphen.

lawmaking
One word. No hyphen.

lecturer
Lowercase, even before a person's name.

lectures
Capitalize the title of an individual lecture.
Enclose in quotation marks.

> Yuval Levin, director of social, cultural, and constitutional studies at the American Enterprise Institute, presented "A Time to Build" as part of the Political Theory Colloquium lecture series.

Lowercase the subject matter of an individual lecture if the title is unknown or nonexistent.

> Donna Brazile, the first Black woman to manage a presidential campaign, spoke about navigating the political arena during an event at the Women and Politics Institute.

lecture series
Capitalize headline-style. Use roman type.

> Books That Shaped America
> Exploring Social Justice
> Political Theory Colloquium

less

Means *not as much*.
Use with uncountable nouns.

Last winter brought less snow and more rain to the DC area.

see also **fewer**

lifelong

One word. No hyphen.

links

Capitalize headline-style in running text. Use roman type.

Go to Work @ AU on the myAU Portal and click on the Benefits: myBenefits link.

see also **headlines, websites**

living-learning community

One hyphen.

LISTSERV

Not a preferred term.
Use *mailing list* or *email list* instead.
see also **trademarks**

log in (verb)

Two words. No hyphen.

login (noun)

One word. No hyphen.

long (suffix)

Check **merriam-webster.com** for spellings of words with this suffix.

a daylong seminar, an hour-long lecture, a weeklong workshop, a semester-long program

longtime (adjective)

One word. No hyphen.

M

magazines
see **periodicals**

magna cum laude
Means *with great distinction.*
Lowercase. Use italics.
see also **cum laude, summa cum laude**

main campus
Two words. Lowercase both.
see also **East Campus, Tenley Campus**

majors
Lowercase in running text, unless a proper noun is included.

> She is an Arabic studies major, with a double minor in justice and law and religion.

see also **minors**

measurements
Spell out words like *degrees, feet, inches,* and *percent* in running text.

> During winter break, domestic hot water temperatures are set to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
> *not* During winter break, domestic hot water temperatures are set to 120˚ Fahrenheit.

Use numerals with percentages, temperatures, and symbols.

> In summer 2020, about 44 percent of American workers were able to telework.
> *not* In summer 2020, about forty-four percent of American workers were able to telework.

Symbols (˚ , ", ' , %) may be used in charts and tables.

Metro
Capitalize when referring to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).
May be used even on first reference.

Metro stations and lines
Capitalize names of Metro stations and lines.

> Tenleytown–AU, Van Ness–UDC, the Red Line

33

mid (prefix)

No hyphen, unless followed by a proper noun or numerals.

mid-Atlantic, midterm, temperatures in the mid-50s

midnight

Use instead of *12 a.m.*
see also **time**

military ranks

see **professional titles and positions**

minors

Lowercase in running text, unless a proper noun is included.
see also **majors**

money

Use numerals and the dollar symbol for amounts between $100 and $999,999.
For amounts of $1 million or more, combine numerals with *million* or *billion*.
Place a comma after the thousands place in four-digit dollar amounts.

The average US worker spends $1,000 a year on coffee.

see also **numbers**

months

Capitalize.
Spell out unless space is limited. Always spell out in running text.
Use three-letter abbreviations if space is limited, such as in advertisements or tables.

Apr. 2022, Oct. 2022

Omit comma after month when followed by year.

January 2022, May 2023

Mx.

May be used as a gender-neutral alternative to *Mr.* or *Ms.*
see also **courtesy titles, gender-neutral language**

multimedia

One word. No hyphen.

multiyear

One word. No hyphen.

Muslim (adjective or noun)

Capitalize. Refers to people.
see also **Islamic**

N

name suffixes

Do not use a comma after a surname and before *Jr., Sr., III*, etc.

> Sam Fulwood III
> Henry Louis Gates Jr.

named spaces

see **buildings, campus locations, rooms**

names of people

see **chosen names, initials**

native (adjective or noun)

Lowercase when referring to a person born in a certain place.

> their native Wyoming, the Georgia native

Native (adjective or noun)

Capitalize when referring to a person's ethnicity.

> Alaska Native, Native American

see sections 8.38–39 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance
see also **ethnicities, Indigenous**

newspapers

see **periodicals**

no.

Use with a numeral for rankings.
Do not use the number symbol/pound sign/hashtag in running text.

> Kogod's online MBA program, which launched in 2015,
> ranked no. 7 for marketing and no. 12 for management by
> *US News and World Report.*
> *not* Kogod's online MBA program, which launched in 2015,
> ranked #7 for marketing and #12 for management by
> *US News and World Report.*

Capitalize in headlines.

> Kogod's Online MBA Ranks No. 7 for Marketing, No. 12
> for Management

non (prefix)

Check **merriam-webster.com** for spellings of words with this prefix.

> noncredit, nondegree, nonprofit, non-thesis

noon

Use instead of *12 p.m.*
see also **midnight, time**

numbers

Spell out whole numbers *zero* through *nine* and their corresponding ordinals, *first* through *ninth*.
Use numerals for *10* and above, along with their corresponding ordinals: *10th, 11th, 12th,* etc.
Endings of ordinal numbers should not appear in superscript.

the 140th commencement
not the 140th commencement

Place a comma after the thousands place in four-digit numbers.
Spell out common fractions such as *one-half* and *two-thirds*.
Use numerals for other fractions and decimal fractions: *15/16, 3.8,* etc.

Numerals may be used for consistency, even where spelled-out numbers would normally appear.

AU's volleyball team leads the Patriot League Championships with 44 wins and 5 losses.

Use *million* and *billion* in combination with spelled-out numbers or numerals.

Low-flow fixtures on East Campus save five million gallons of water per year.
Netflix boasts 60 million subscribers in the US alone.
Cats kill between one and four billion birds every year.
There are more than 35 billion Google searches each month.

Spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence.

Forty-four percent of American workers were able to telework in summer 2020.

Rewrite sentences to avoid spelling out lengthy numbers.

Graduate students enrolled at AU numbered 4,198 in fall 2019.
not Four thousand, one hundred ninety-eight graduate students enrolled at AU in fall 2019.

see also **centuries, credit hours, dates, GPA, measurements, money, time, years**

O

offices

Capitalize names of specific campus entities.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

the Office of Campus Life, the office

The word *office* may be dropped when referring to more than one in running text.

Campus Life and Human Resources fought it out for first place in the volleyball tournament during Staff Appreciation Week.

on-campus/off-campus (adjective)

Use hyphen.

on-campus housing, off-campus parking

on campus/off campus (adverb)

No hyphen.

activities on campus, students who live off campus

P

part-time (adjective)

Use hyphen when modifying a noun.

He is a part-time employee of American University.

part time (adverb)

Two words. No hyphen.

He works part time at American University.

percentages

see **measurements**

periodicals

Use italics for titles. Capitalize headline-style.
Lowercase an initial *the* regardless of title on masthead.
Use roman type for an initial *the*.

the *American University Business Law Review*
Congress & the Presidency
the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*
the *Washington Post*

American magazine is published three times a year by American University. With a circulation of 110,000, *American* is sent to alumni and other members of the university community.

periods

Follow by a single space between sentences.

phone numbers

Use hyphens after area code and before last four digits.

Do not enclose area code in parentheses.

photo captions

Tell a one-sentence story that describes the action in or sets the context for the photo.

With photos of two people, use *left* in parentheses after the name of the person on the left.

Use *from left* followed by a colon before identifying three or more people by name.

plays

Use italics for titles.

Capitalize headline-style.

> *Elsewhere in Elsinore: The Unseen Women of Hamlet,* by Caleen Jennings

see also **headlines**

p.m.

Lowercase. Use periods.

No space between *p.* and *m.*

see also **midnight, noon, time**

poems

Use roman type. No italics.

Enclose in quotation marks.

> At the Veterans Day ceremony in November 2019, Sophie Nowak read "In Flanders Fields," the poem by World War I veteran John McCrae whose imagery inspired the adaptation of the red poppy as a symbol of remembrance.

political affiliations

Place in parentheses after name.

Use two-letter postal code abbreviation for state.

Use hyphen between party and state.

> Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD) is a WCL professor of law emeritus.

post (prefix)

Check **merriam-webster.com** for spellings of words with this prefix.

> post-master's certificate, Center for Postsecondary Readiness and Success

postal addresses

Use comma after street name and quadrant if a floor or room number follows.
Separate street name and quadrant with one space. No comma.
Abbreviate quadrants with capital letters only. No periods.

4401 Connecticut Avenue NW, 6th Floor
not 4401 Connecticut Avenue, NW, 6th Floor
not 4401 Connecticut Avenue N.W., 6th Floor

pre (prefix)

Check **merriam-webster.com** for spellings of words with this prefix.

preregistration, pre-semester

President's Circle

Apostrophe goes between *t* and *s*.

professional titles and positions

Capitalize when a person's name immediately follows.

President Burwell
Professor Borum Chattoo
Professor Laura Beers
Dean Wilkins
Coach Marsha Harper

Lowercase a professional title when it is modified, or when it follows
a name.

American University president Sylvia M. Burwell
Sylvia M. Burwell, president of American University

SPA dean Vicky Wilkins
Vicky Wilkins, dean of the School of Public Affairs

SOC professor and CMSI executive director Caty Borum Chattoo
Caty Borum Chattoo, SOC professor and executive director of CMSI

Laura Beers, history professor
history professor Laura Beers

women's soccer coach Marsha Harper
Marsha Harper, women's soccer coach

Lowercase long occupational or descriptive titles before or after a name.

>assistant vice president of creative services Kevin Grasty
>Kevin Grasty, assistant vice president of creative services

Capitalize endowed chairs and named professorships before or after a name.

>University Professor Patricia Aufderheide
>Patricia Aufderheide, University Professor

Avoid stating a professor's exact rank, except in lists of faculty that give credentials.
see also **acting, endowed chairs and professorships, former, in residence, interim**

program
Capitalize when part of the full, official name.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

>Master's Accelerator Program, the program, Washington Semester Program

pronouns
Learn and use the pronouns associated with the people you write about.
Understand that a person's pronouns may vary or change over time.
see **Pronouns: A Guide for the American University Community**
see also **chair, gender-neutral language, Latinx, Mx.**

publications
see **articles (published), books, periodicals, plays, poems, songs**

punctuation
see sections 6.1–132 of *The Chicago Manual Style* for further guidance on punctuation not covered by this guide—including colons, semicolons, and slashes
see **ampersands, apostrophes, commas, em dashes, en dashes, hyphens, exclamation points, periods, quotation marks**

Q

quad

Lowercase, unless part of the full name of a building or named space.

> AU's annual staff picnic is held on the quad.
> This year's Veterans Day ceremony will take place on Eric Freidheim Quadrangle.
> Her office is in the East Quad Building.

quotation marks

Periods and commas go inside.

> "The myth is that only wealthy people in rich countries can afford to care about the environment," Broad says. "But around the world, it is often poor people who care the most. They are more dependent on natural resources, and they are the ones more likely to take organized actions on the ground to protect them."

Colons and semicolons go outside.

> One panelist stressed "the bottom line"; the other spoke of the human cost.

> Take, for example, the first stanza of "The Star-Spangled Banner": It is the best known of the original poem's four stanzas, and the one most often sung aloud at sporting events.

Question marks and exclamation points go inside when part of quoted material.

> "I have never seen people eat so much food!" said the cook for the football team.

Question marks and exclamation points go outside when not part of quoted material.

> Who first came up with AU's motto "Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle"?

see also **articles** (published)**, lectures, poems, songs**

R

races

Use the terms preferred by the people you write about.
Preferred terms may vary and do change over time.
see section 8.38 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* and **"Black and White: A Matter of Capitalization"**
see also **Black, ethnicities, White**

residence hall

Preferred term.
Use instead of *dorm* or *dormitory.*

résumé

Use acute accents over each *e.*

rooms

Capitalize when used in postal addresses.
Lowercase in running text.
Use numerals for numbered rooms.
Capitalize named rooms in running text.

> Orientation will be held in Mary Graydon Center, room 200.
> The staff retreat will take place in Butler Board Room.

see also **buildings, campus locations**

RSVP

Omit *please* before this term.
SVP stands for *s'il vous plait*, a French term meaning *if you please.*
No periods.

S

sabbatical
Preferred term.
Use instead of *sabbatical leave.*

scholars
Capitalize when used with named scholarships or scholarly programs.
Lowercase when used alone or in a generic sense.

> Community-Based Research Scholars
> Frederick Douglass Distinguished Scholars

see also **fellows**

scholarships
Capitalize specific scholarships.
Lowercase when used in a generic sense.

> Established in 2002, the Jane R. Glaser Scholarship supports
> undergraduate students in the School of Public Affairs who plans
> to study abroad in Israel for at least one semester.

> The scholarship is awarded to first-year graduate students.

see also **awards, fellowships**

schools
Capitalize full names of schools in running text.
Lowercase on subsequent references or when used in generic sense.
Omit periods in abbreviated versions.

> the College of Arts and Sciences, the college, CAS
> Kogod Business School, Kogod (*never* KSB)
> the School of Communication (*not* Communications)

see **Schools and Colleges** for a full list of AU-affiliated schools and colleges
see also **grad info**

scientific names
Capitalize genus. Lowercase species. Use italics.

> Becca Peixotto, CAS/MA '13, CAS/PhD '17, coauthored a paper about a
> newly discovered hominin species, *Homo naledi.*

> American University researchers sequenced the genome of the "devil worm,"
> the deepest-living animal on earth. *Halicephalobus mephisto* was named for
> Mephistopheles, a subterranean demon featured in German folklore.

scriptwriter/scriptwriting
One word. No hyphen.

seasons
Lowercase in running text.
Omit *of* when followed by a year.

> fall 2021, spring 2022

semesters
Lowercase in running text.

> fall semester, spring semester

semiannual(ly)
Means every *six months* or *twice a year*.

semimonthly
Means *twice a month*.

semiweekly
Means *twice a week*.

she/her/hers
see **pronouns**

smartphone
One word.

songs
Use roman type. No italics.
Enclose in quotation marks.

> AU Chamber Singers sang "Wanting Memories" in a spring 2021
> commencement video.

Sr. (Senior)
see **name suffixes**

staff (noun)
Use singular form of verb, unless followed by *members*.

> While the pandemic keeps arts institutions closed nationwide, the AU Museum staff
> is finding new ways to engage patrons with the AU Museum at Home initiative.

> AU Museum staff members are finding new ways to engage patrons.

start-up (noun)
Use hyphen.

states
Two-letter postal codes should be used for address labels, lists, and tables.
Use full names of states in running text.

> Madelaine Reis, SPA/MA '20, returned to her native New York on
> March 3 for a doctor's appointment, expecting a quick, four-day trip.

If the state is preceded by a city in running text, follow the name of the state
with a comma.

> Falls Church, Virginia, is a suburb of Washington, DC.

Capitalize state if it follows the official name of the state.
Use this construction to distinguish between cities and states that share a name.

> Washington State, New York State

student-athletes
Use hyphen.

suites
see **rooms**

summa cum laude
Means *with highest distinction.*
Lowercase. Use italics.
see also **cum laude, magna cum laude**

syllabi
Preferred plural.
Use instead of *syllabuses*.

T

task force
Two words.

team-taught (adjective)
Use hyphen.

team teach(ing)
Two words.

teamwork
One word.

telephone numbers
see **phone numbers**

television stations and channels
Capitalize. No periods.
Use hyphen to separate TV from call letters.
Add network and channel of local affiliate in parentheses.

> WETA-TV (PBS 26)
> WRC-TV (NBC 4)
> WTTG-TV (FOX 5)

Tenley Campus
Two words. Capitalize both.
see also **East Campus, main campus**

tests and exams
May be abbreviated even on first reference.
Capitalize. Omit periods.

> GMAT, GRE, LSAT, SAT, TOEFL

Avoid redundant language.

> We recommend taking the GRE no later than February 15.
> *not* We recommend taking the GRE exams no later than February 15.

the
see **headlines, periodicals**

theater
Preferred spelling when used in a generic sense.

theatre

Use this spelling with AU's theatre and musical theatre programs.
Follow a venue's spelling preference for *theater* or *theatre*.

> the Greenberg Theatre, the National Theatre, the theatre
> Mosaic Theater Company, the theater

they/them/their(s)

Use as a singular pronoun to refer to a specific person in an affirming manner.

> Nic Sakurai, CAS/MA '07, was the first person in the US to have
> a nonbinary gender designation on their driver's license.

Rewrite sentences to avoid referring to a nonspecific person of unspecified gender.

> Someone left a coat on that chair.
> *not* Someone left their coat on that chair.

see sections 5.48, 5.252, and 5.256 of *The Chicago Manual of Style*
see also **pronouns**

time

Use *o'clock* with spelled-out numbers.

> seven o'clock, quarter to four, half past eight

Use *a.m.* or *p.m.* with numerals.

> 2:30 p.m.

Use an en dash—or *from* and *to*—between two times to indicate a range.

> The workshop runs from 1 to 3 p.m.
> The 1–3 p.m. workshop started late and ran long.

Use zeroes after the hour when combining with a fractional time.

> You are scheduled to attend an orientation session for new hires
> on Monday, March 15, 2021, from 9:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

see also **a.m., dates, midnight, noon, p.m.**

time frame

Two words.

time zones

If needed, place abbreviation in parentheses after time.

> Monday, March 14, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. (EDT)
> Monday, November 7, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. (EST)

titled

Preferred term.
Use instead of *entitled* when referring to titles of published or creative works.

titles

see **articles (published), artworks, books, court cases, courtesy, exhibitions, films, periodicals, plays, poems, professional titles and positions, songs**

toward

Preferred term.
Use instead of *towards.*

trademarks

Capitalize corporate and brand names. Follow with a generic term if possible.
Avoid using as verbs. Check **merriam-webster.com** for exceptions.
see sections 8.153–155 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance

transgender (adjective)

One word. No hyphen.
Describes people whose gender identity differs from their assigned-at-birth sex.
Antonym to *cisgender.*
see also **cisgender**

trans man/trans men

Two words. No hyphen.
Abbreviated form of *transgender man/trandgender men.*
see also **cis man/cis men**

trans woman/trans women

Two words. No hyphen.
Abbreviated form of *transgender woman/transgender women.*
see also **cis woman/cis women**

trustees

Lowercase.
Capitalize when used with *Board of Trustees.*

> Gina F. Adams, SPA/BA '80, has served on AU's Board of Trustees since 2007.

> AU trustee Gina F. Adams, SPA/BA '80, has served as vice chair of the board since 2020.

> AU welcomed trustees Maria Otero and Wes Bush to the board in March 2021.

see also **Board of Trustees**

T-shirt

Use hyphen. Use a capital *T* even in running text.

U

underway (adjective or adverb)
One word.

universities with branches
Follow an institution's preference on linking the location to the name of the school.

the University of California, Los Angeles (comma)
the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (preposition)
the University of Wisconsin–Madison (en dash)

see also **en dashes**

university
Capitalize when referring to a specific institution.
Lowercase subsequent references and when used in a generic sense.

American University, the university

up-to-date (adjective)
Use hyphens.

Please consult the most up-to-date version of the FAQ.

up to date (adverb)
No hyphens.

Please keep the FAQ up to date.

URLs (uniform resource locators)
see **web addresses**

US (adjective or noun)
Omit periods in print publications.
May be abbreviated even on first reference.

According to AU professor Joe Young and University of Alabama professor Erin Kearns, SPA/PhD '16, people's views on torture depend upon several factors, including whether or not the US is experiencing a time of relative peace.

Use periods to make web writing accessible.
Screen readers often pronounce *US* as *us*.

username
One word.

V

vertical lists

- Use to highlight important information.
- Include at least three items, never just one.
- Precede with text, not just a header.
- End lead-in text with a colon if it is a complete sentence.
- Capitalize full sentences. Use terminal punctuation.
- Lowercase sentence fragments.
- Avoid mixing full sentences and sentence fragments.
- Begin each item in list with the same part of speech (e.g., in this list, an imperative verb).
- Number each item if sequence or hierarchy is important.
- Use bullets if sequence or hierarchy does not matter.

Veterans Day

No apostrophe.

vice (prefix)

No hyphen.

> vice chair, vice provost, vice president

VIP (very important person)

May be abbreviated even on first reference.

voice mail

Two words. No hyphen.

W

WAMU

Capitalize all letters. No periods.

Washington, DC

No periods in DC.
Follow both *Washington* and *DC* with commas in running text.
Reword sentences to avoid an excess of punctuation.

> Universities in the Washington, DC, area are closed due to severe winter weather.
> *or* Washington–area universities are closed due to severe winter weather.
> *or* DC–area universities are closed due to severe winter weather.
> *not* Washington, DC,–area universities are close due to severe winter weather.

web addresses

Use roman type. Do not underline in print publications.
Use camel case in running text to increase readability.

> Visit go.american.edu/GoodNeighbor for information about
> AU's parking policy.
> *not* Visit go.american.edu/goodneighbor for information about
> AU's parking policy.

Avoid *http://* or *https://* in print or when writing for the web.
Include *www.* in front of hyperlinks when writing for the web.

Web addresses should not end sentences in marketing collateral.
Rewrite sentences to avoid following web addresses with a period.

> Visit american.edu to learn more.
> *not* Learn more at american.edu.

When writing for the web, use hyperlinked text rather than displaying
the web address.

> Visit **Housing and Residence Life** for information about residence halls.
> *not* Visit **https://www.american.edu/ocl/housing** for information about
> residence halls.

In print advertisements, web addresses may appear in bold type for emphasis.
Avoid using long web addresses in print.
UCM can create vanity web addresses for marketing campaigns and publications.
If a web address spans more than one line of text, do not insert a hyphen to signal
a line break. A line break should occur *after* a colon or a double slash and *before*

other punctuation marks and numerals. An ampersand or an equals sign within a web address may appear *before* or *after* a line break.
see sections 14.17–18 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidance

web page
Two words. Lowercase.

web pages
Capitalize titles headline-style in running text. Use roman type.

> Please consult the Campus Services and Hours web page about AU's operating status.

see **headlines**

website
One word. Lowercase.

websites
Capitalize titles headline-style in running text. Use roman type.

> Please visit our Admissions website to learn more about applying to AU.

see **headlines**

White
Capitalize when referring to a person's racial and ethnic identity.
see section 8.38 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* and **"Black and White: A Matter of Capitalization"**
see also **ethnicities**

wide (suffix)
Use hyphen with place names and base words of three or more syllables.

> DC-wide, university-wide

No hyphen when used with base words of two syllables or fewer.

> campuswide, nationwide, statewide, systemwide, worldwide

work-study
Use hyphen.

Y

years

Use numerals, except when a year begins a sentence.

> The University Club became part of the Bridge Café for fall 2020.

Avoid spelling out a year at the beginning of a sentence.
Reword the sentence instead.

> The COVID-19 pandemic reached the United States in 2020.
> *not* Twenty twenty was the year the COVID-19 pandemic reached
> the United States.

Use an en dash—or *from* and *to*—between two years to indicate a range.

> The 1927–1955 yearbooks were titled *AUCOLA* rather than the *Talon.*
> American University yearbooks dating from 1927 to 1998 have been digitized.

With a date that includes month and day, follow the year with a comma
in running text.

> American University began remote operations on March 16, 2020,
> and moved to modified operations on July 1, 2020.

see also **academic years, dates, en dashes, fiscal years, grad info**

Z

Z.

Clawed's middle initial.
Capitalize. Use period.

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS AND NOTICES

Accommodating People with Disabilities Notice

Use a notice such as this on invitations and event announcements and advetisements:

> To request a disability-related accommodation or accessibility information, please contact [department/staff member] at [phone/email]. Requests should be made by [date at least two weeks prior to the event].

Accreditation Statement

To comply with US Department of Education regulations, use this statement on all print materials:

> Visit american.edu/academics for more information regarding the accreditation and state licensing of American University.

Preferred placement is on back cover, either above or below the university logo and address. Font size can be small, as long as it is legible.

Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Statement

Use the statement below for major university publications and the AU home page:

> American University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, source of income, place of residence or business, veteran status, or any other bases under federal or local laws in its programs and activities, including employment and admission. The university also expressly prohibits any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and stalking. For information, contact the assistant vice president and Title IX coordinator (**equityoffice@american.edu**, 202-885-8080) at American University, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20016.

Place in an easy-to-find position such as the title page or inside front or back cover.

Use one of the shorter versions in publications where space is limited:

American University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution that operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
(Preferred if space permits.)

American University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer
(*or* university).

An equal opportunity, affirmative action university.

EO/AA

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC